

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



FISCAL NOTE

SB 592 - HB 787

March 13, 2017

SUMMARY OF BILL: Requires eligible individuals applying for a motor vehicle driver or photo identification license to be automatically registered to vote. Requires county election commissions, upon receiving a completed voter registration, to notify the individual that if they wish to decline the registration they must notify the county election commission within 21 calendar days.

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:

Increase State Expenditures – \$275,000/One-Time

Increase Local Expenditures – Exceeds \$648,000/Recurring*

Assumptions:

- Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 2-2-201(a), the Department of Safety (DOS) includes a voter registration application as part of any motor vehicle driver or photo identification license application, and such applications offer individuals the option to decline to register to vote.
- The proposed language would automatically register any person applying for a motor vehicle driver or photo identification license to vote. Such applicants would not be given an option to decline registration at the time of application.
- Under current law, pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 2-2-201(a)(2)(D), the DOS is required to provide voter registration applications to county election commissions; as a result, there will be no increase in state expenditures for such notification.
- The proposed legislation would require county election commissions to provide notification that the registered individual has 21 calendar days to decline registration.
- It is assumed that only persons not previously registered to vote and subsequently registered to vote as a direct result of passage of this bill will receive a notification on declining voter registration.
- County election commissions will require additional postage and printing costs associated with the newly required notifications.
- Approximately 1,600,000 transactions were completed by the Drivers Services Division within the DOS in FY15-16.
- Assuming the number of transactions remains constant each fiscal year and approximately 75 percent of applicable applications are currently unregistered voters,

the mandatory recurring increase in local expenditures for mailing notifications is estimated to exceed \$648,000 [(1,600,000 transactions x 75%) x (\$0.49 postage + \$0.05 envelope and printing cost per notification)].

- Updates to the voter registration database will be required in order to account for persons automatically registered who have 21 days to decline registration. Such updates are estimated to result in a one-time increase in state expenditures of \$275,000.

**Article II, Section 24 of the Tennessee Constitution provides that: no law of general application shall impose increased expenditure requirements on cities or counties unless the General Assembly shall provide that the state share in the cost.*

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Krista M. Lee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Krista M. Lee, Executive Director

/jrh